

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 04732 01 OF 02 062136Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 /058 W  
-----062209Z 088411 /73

P 062014Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3705  
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL  
ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 04732

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, CA  
SUBJECT: NEW HOPE FOR PRESERVATION OF CANADIAN UNITY

REF: QUEBEC 211

1. SUMMARY. THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL SIGNS THIS PAST WEEK THAT THE PARTI QUEBECOIS (PQ) IS NOW PREPARED TO TRY TO NEGOTIATE A NEW FORM OF FEDERALISM PRIOR TO A REFERENDUM. IN RESPONSE TO THESE SIGNS, PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU HAS INDICATED THAT HE IS WILLING TO LISTEN TO WHAT THE PQ HAS IN MIND, PROVIDED IT WANTS QUEBEC TO STAY IN CONFEDERATION. NO ONE IS PREDICTING ANY EARLY SOLUTION TO THE QUEBEC PROBLEM, BUT AT LEAST THE PQ NOW SEEMS WILLING TO TALK WITH OTTAWA ABOUT A NEW STATUS FOR QUEBEC WITHIN A CANADIAN CONFEDERATION. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THIS PAST WEEK SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCURRED WHICH MAY INDICATE THAT QUEBEC'S THIRST FOR AUTONOMY CAN EVENTUALLY BE SATISFIED IN A WAY WHICH WILL PRESERVE THE CANADIAN CONFEDERATION. THESE DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDE: A) PREMIER LEVESQUE'S REFERENCE TO "POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY" AND HIS AVOIDANCE OF THE WORD "INDEPENDENCE"  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 04732 01 OF 02 062136Z

IN DEFINING THE PARTI QUEBECOIS' ULTIMATE GOAL AS HE SPOKE TO THE PQ CONVENTION IN MONTREAL; B) INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS MINISTER CLAUDE MORIN'S ASSERTION IN THE QUEBEC NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THAT "TOTAL SOVEREIGNTY" OR "COMPLETE RUPTURE" ARE NO LONGER APPLICABLE; C) MORIN'S ACCEPTANCE OF AN INVITATION TO ATTEND THIS MONTH'S CONFERENCE ON "CANADA'S DESTINY" SPONSORED BY YORK UNIV-

ERSITY; AND D) MORIN'S JUNE 1 DECLARATION IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THAT HE IS WILLING TO TRY TO NEGOTIATE A NEW FORM OF CONFEDERATION WITH OTTAWA.

3. IN RESPONSE TO A VARIETY OF QUESTIONS ON THIS LATTER POINT AT WEEKLY NEWS CONFERENCE ON JUNE 2, PRIME MINISTER  
CONFIDENTIAL

TRUDEAU GAVE A QUALIFIED, POSITIVE RESPONSE BY STATING:  
"IF MR. LEVESQUE, AFTER HAVING SAID THAT HE WILL NOT NEGOTIATE UNTIL AFTER A REFERENDUM, IS NOW SAYING THAT HE IS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE, THAT IS A VERY, VERY WELCOME STATEMENT. I AM NOT GOING TO BE HUNG UP ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS STATEMENTS. IF THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT REALLY WANTS TO LOOK AT A NEW FORM OF CONSTITUTION WHEREBY QUEBEC, WITHIN CANADA, WOULD BE PLAYING A DIFFERENT KIND OF ROLE AND EXERCISE DIFFERENT POWERS, AND THE OTHER PROVINCES WOULD, TOO, THEN, LET'S SIT DOWN AND SEE WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND." TRUDEAU ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAS NO INTENTION OF PROPOSING NOW ANY NEW INITIATIVES ON CONFEDERATION, BUT THAT HE MAY DO SO IN THE FALL.

4. COMMENT: THERE ARE SEVERAL THEORIES CIRCULATING HERE WHY THE PQ APPEARS TO BE BACKING AWAY FROM THE CONCEPT OF INDEPENDENCE AND NOW SEEMS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH OTTAWA PRIOR TO A REFERENDUM. ONE IS THAT RECENT POLLS SHOW THAT, WHILE THE PQ REMAINS POPULAR AMONG THE QUEBEC ELECTORATE, SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE HAS NOT INCREASED SINCE NOVEMBER AND IN FACT, ACCORDING TO ONE POLL, HAS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 04732 01 OF 02 062136Z

DECREASED SLIGHTLY. THUS, THE PQ MAY HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT CANNOT WIN A REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE DURING ITS CURRENT ELECTORAL MANDATE.

5. ANOTHER THING IS THAT MORIN IS INSINCERE IN HINTING ABOUT A NEW FORM OF FEDERALISM FOR CANADA AND THAT PQ IS STILL AS STRONGLY COMMITTED TO INDEPENDENCE AS EVER. A CONTRASTING THEORY IS THAT THE LEADERS OF THE PQ, INCLUDING LEVESQUE, CLAUDE MORIN, JACQUES-YVAN MORIN, AND PARIZEAU WERE NEVER TRUE BELIEVERS IN COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE AND THAT THEY ARE NOW REVEALING PUBLICLY WHAT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THEIR PRIVATE FEELINGS. EVEN IF THIS ASSUMPTION IS CORRECT, QUESTION ARISES WHY THE PQ HAS PICKED THIS MOMENT TO INDICATE A WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE NEW TERMS WITH OTTAWA PRIOR TO A REFERENDUM. THE ANSWER MAY BE THAT LATEST NATIONAL POLLS AND RECENT BY-ELECTIONS INDICATE THAT LIBERALS ARE LIKELY TO WIN A NATIONAL ELECTION WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR AND, HOWEVER MUCH THEY DISLIKE TRUDEAU, THE PQ LEADERS ARE PROBABLY GOING TO HAVE

TO DEAL WITH HIM DURING THEIR PRESENT MANDATE.

6. LEVESQUE AND COMPANY MAY HAVE ALSO CONCLUDED THAT THEY HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BY ENTERING INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH TRUDEAU. IF THEY GAINED GREATER AUTONOMY FOR QUEBEC IN THE PROCESS, THAT IN ITSELF WOULD BE A PLUS. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, TRUDEAU PROVED UNWILLING TO MAKE ANY

SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS IN QUEBEC'S FAVOR, HIS INTRANSIG-

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 04732 02 OF 02 062138Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 /058 W

-----062208Z 088555 /73

P 062014Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3706  
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL  
ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 OTTAWA 04732

ENCE COULD BE USED BY THE PQ IN A REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN.

7. WE SHARE CONSULATE GENERAL QUEBEC'S VIEW THAT THE BEST SOLUTION TO THE SEPARATIST THREAT MAY ULTIMATELY BE FOUND IN A FORMULA WHICH QUEBEC COULD CALL SOVEREIGNTY AND WHICH THE REST OF CANADA COULD CALL CONFEDERATION. IT IS CERTAINLY NOT BEYOND THE IMAGINATION AND INGENUITY OF PEOPLE IN BOTH OTTAWA AND QUEBEC CITY TO DEVISE SUCH A FORMULA, BUT REAL QUESTION IS WHETHER THERE IS WILLINGNESS TO ACHIEVE IT. ENDERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN



## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** SECESSION, PROVINCE, FEDERALISM, NEGOTIATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 06-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977OTTAWA04732  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770201-0644  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** OTTAWA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770687/aaaacyjc.tel  
**Line Count:** 162  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 813f3984-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 QUEBEC 211  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2263314  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** NEW HOPE FOR PRESERVATION OF CANADIAN UNITY  
**TAGS:** PINT, CA  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/813f3984-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009